

LANCHESTER RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Interim report of the Medical Officer of Health
for the year 1947.

To the Chairman and members of the Lanchester Rural District Council.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen.

I have pleasure in presenting my annual report on the Health and Sanitary Circumstances of Lanchester Rural District during 1947.

The Vital Statistics are satisfactory and the low Infant Mortality Rate, Zymotic Deathrate and Tuberculosis Deathrate are pleasing features.

Housing forms one of the major problems facing the Council, and this is being dealt with as energetically as conditions permit.

I take this opportunity of thanking all members of the staff for their loyal co-operation..

The help of the Officers and staff of other departments has been willingly given and I thank them.

The wholehearted support of the Chairman and of all members of the Council in Public Health work is greatly appreciated,

I am, Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Yours faithfully,

J.G. Walker,
Medical Officer of Health.

Health Department,
Council Offices,
Lanchester.

September, 1948.

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Interim report of the Medical Officer of Health
for the year 1947.

Summary of General and Vital Statistics.

Area in Acres.....	44,243.
Population (Census 1931)	16,413.
Population (Mid-year 1947).....	14,580.
Number of inhabited houses according to Rate-books	4,139.
Reduced Rateable Value	£68,483.
Sum represented by a penny rate.....	£254.
Births during the year	294.
Birthrate	20.0.
Deaths during the year	172.
Crude deathrate ..	11.7.
Infantile Mortality Rate	30.6.
Tuberculosis deathrate	0.27.
Pulmonary Tuberculosis deathrate ...	0.135.
Non-Pulmonary Tuberculosis deathrate	0.135.
Zymotic deathrate	0.06.

Special Causes of Sickness.

There were no special causes of sickness during the year.

Extracts from Vital Statistics.

	Total	M	F	
Live) Legitimate	285	150	135	Birthrate per 1,000 of the estimated resident population - 20.0
Births) Illegitimate	9	6	3	
Total.	294	156	138	
Still) Legitimate	5	4	1	Rate per 1,000 total (live and still) births - 20.0
Births) Illegitimate	1	1	1	
Total.	6	5	1	
Deaths from all causes	172	99	73	Deathrate per 1,000 of estimated resident population - 11.7

Deaths from Puerperal Causes:-

No. 29 Puerperal Sepsis Nil.
No. 30 Other Puerperal Causes Nil.

Deathrate of Infants under one year of age:-

All Infants per 1,000 live births...	30.6
Legitimate Infants per 1,000 Legitimate live births....	31.5
Illegitimate Infants per 1,000 Illegitimate live births	Nil.
Deaths from Cancer (All ages).....	25.0
Deaths from Measles.....	Nil.
Deaths from Whooping Cough....	Nil.
Deaths from Diarrhoea (Under two years).....	1.

Population estimated by Registrar General.. .. 14,580.

CAUSES OF DEATH IN LANCHESTER RURAL DISTRICT, 1947.

CAUSES OF DEATH.	MALES	FEMALES
All Causes	99	73
1. Typhoid and Para-Typhoid Fevers	-	-
2. Cerebro-Spinal Fever.....	-	-
3. Scarlet Fever	-	-
4. Whooping Cough.....	-	-
5. Diphtheria....	-	-
6. Tuberculosis of Respiratory System...	1	1
7. Other forms of Tuberculosis....	-	2
8. Syphilitic Diseases	-	-
9. Influenza.....	-	-
10. Measles	-	-
11. Acute Poliomyelitis and Polio-encephalitis.	-	-
12. Acute Infantile Encephalitis...	-	1
13. Cancer of Buccal Cavity}	1	-
Cancer of Uterus }	-	-
14. Cancer of Stomach and Duodenum.	5	4
15. Cancer of Braest... ..	-	4
16. Cancer of all other sites	8	3
17. Diabetes.....	-	1
18. Inter Cranial vascular lesions.	17	13
19. Heart Disease	42	21
20. Other Diseases of Circulatory System.	3	2
21. Bronchitis... ..	3	2
22. Pneumonia....	1	2
23. Other Respiratory Diseases.....	-	2
24. Ulcer of Stomach or Duodenum... ..	-	-
25. Diarrhoea (under two years.....	-	1
26. Appendicitis.	-	-
27. Other Digestive Diseases.	2	2
28. Nephritis....	1	2
29. Puerperal and post abortion sepsis... ..	-	-
30. Other maternal causes....	-	-
31. Premature birth....	2	-
32. Congenital Malformity, Birth injuries etc.,	1	2
33. Suicide.....	-	-
34. Road Traffic Accidents... ..	1	-
35. Other violent causes.....	3	1
36. All other causes... ..	8	7

Zymotic Deathrate.

There was only one death from the principal infectious diseases during 1947. The Zymotic deathrate was 0.06.

The rate for the Administrative County was 0.21.

Infant Mortality Rate.

There were nine deaths of infants under one year of age compared with 11 last year, which gives an infant mortality rate of 30.6. This is below last years rate of 42.0.

Infant Mortality Rate Lanchester Rural District	30.6
Infant Mortality Rate Administrative County	44.0
Infant Mortality Rate England and Wales	41.0
Infant Mortality Rate 148 Towns with Population 25,000 - 50,000	36.0

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES IN THE AREA.

Public Health Officers of the Authority:-

(a) Medical Officer of Health, John G. Walker, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.,
D.P.H.

Whole-time Officer for the Joint Areas of Lanchester Rural
and Consett Urban District Councils.

(b) Sanitary Inspectors:-

G. Rowe, Certificate of S.I.B., and Meat Inspectors Certificate.
(Senior Inspector)

F.E. Terry, Certificate of S.I.B. and Meat Inspectors
Certificate.

50% of the above Officers Salaries are payable from County Funds.

Clerk:- K. Robertshaw.

Prevalence of, and control over Infectious and other Diseases.

There were 317 notifications of infectious diseases
(other than Tuberculosis), compared with 214 in 1946. Measles was
again prevalent and accounted for 181 cases of the 317.

Disease	No. of Notifications.	Number admitted to Hospital.
Erysipelas.....	9	2
Scarlet Fever..	46	39
Diphtheria.....	1	1
Pneumonia	32	9
Enteric..	2	2
Measles..	181	3
Whooping Cough.	40	-
Poliomyelitis..	3	1
Dysentery.	3	2
Totals.	317	59

Non-civilian cases are not included in these figures.

Scarlet Fever.

There was an increase in cases compared with 1946,
46 cases against 11. The type of case was mild and free from
complications. There were no deaths from this disease.

Diphtheria.

One case was notified during 1947, compared with
5 in 1946. The case was of a child aged 9 years who was not
immunised.

DIPHTHERIA NOTIFICATIONS SINCE 1932.

Year.	Cases Notified.	Deaths.
1932	16	2
1933	26	4
1934	63	8
1935	48	10
1936	66	5
1937	91	12
1938	60	4
1939	7	-
1940	5	-
1941	12	-
1942	10	-
1943	14	-
1944	11	1
1945	3	-
1946	5	-
1947	1	-

DIPHTHERIA IMMUNISATION CAMPAIGN. - The results of the measures taken have been satisfactory. The adjusted figures at the end of 1947 were:-

Children under 5 years receiving two doses of A.P.T. in 1947
= 133

Children 5 - 15 years receiving two doses of A.P.T. in 1947
= 26

The following are the percentages of immunised children in your area at the end of 1947:-

Under 5 years - 37.5%
5 - 14 years - 80.0%

Strong efforts are being made to increase the numbers in the lower age group. Reinforcing doses were given to 35 children.

TUBERCULOSIS.

The number of new notifications during 1947 was 21, the position is shown on the following table, which gives the notifications etc., since 1938.

Year.	Notifi- cations	Pulmon ary.	Non-Pul monary.	Deaths	Recovered.	Removed from Area.
1938	24	16	8	3	9	5
1939	20	8	12	7	6	3
1940	11	7	4	7	2	-
1941	24	15	9	5	-	2
1942	15	10	5	6	5	4
1943	15	10	5	4	4	7
1944	14	4	10	4	3	2
1945	24	14	10	8	8	3
1946	13	10	3	7	1	5
1947	21	12	9	4	6	5

The state of the register at the beginning of 1938 was 87 pulmonary and 56 non-pulmonary cases, at the end of 1947 the corresponding figures were 65 and 55.

The housing of tubercular families has received attention in your district for many years, and whilst war conditions have slowed up the process of re-housing, owing to the cessation of building, families in bad circumstances are re-housed as and when opportunity presents itself.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

Water Supply.

Once again, apart from the intermittent supply to part of Burnhope Colliery, the Durham County Water Board supply to the area was satisfactory.

The scheme to link the Board mains supply across the western portion of the district from Tow Law to Rowley, estimated to cost £13,950 and submitted for grant under the Rural Water Supplies Act, 1944, was not agreed to by the Ministry by reason of the relatively high cost.

To replace a lost spring supply at High Alders Farm, caused through surface coal mining operations, a Board mains supply was laid to the farm from the new main near Rowley Village which is laid down Oliverford Lane to Annfield Plain.

One of the small-holdings at Oliverford had a mains supply connected to this new pipe line to replace an unsatisfactory spring supply, to which, previous to the laying of the main, there was no alternative supply.

A similar improvement was carried out to the Croft, Rowley, where previously it was necessary to carry the water supply a considerable distance from a spring near Lyre Dene Farm.

Mains supplies to replace unsuitable spring supplies were installed during the year to Colepike Mill Farm, and the Vicarage, Lanchester.

Some progress was made with private schemes of collecting, pumping, and storing water to replace unreliable and arduous methods of obtaining water for isolated premises. Such schemes were completed at East Buttsfield, Meadowfield, and Field House Farms respectively.

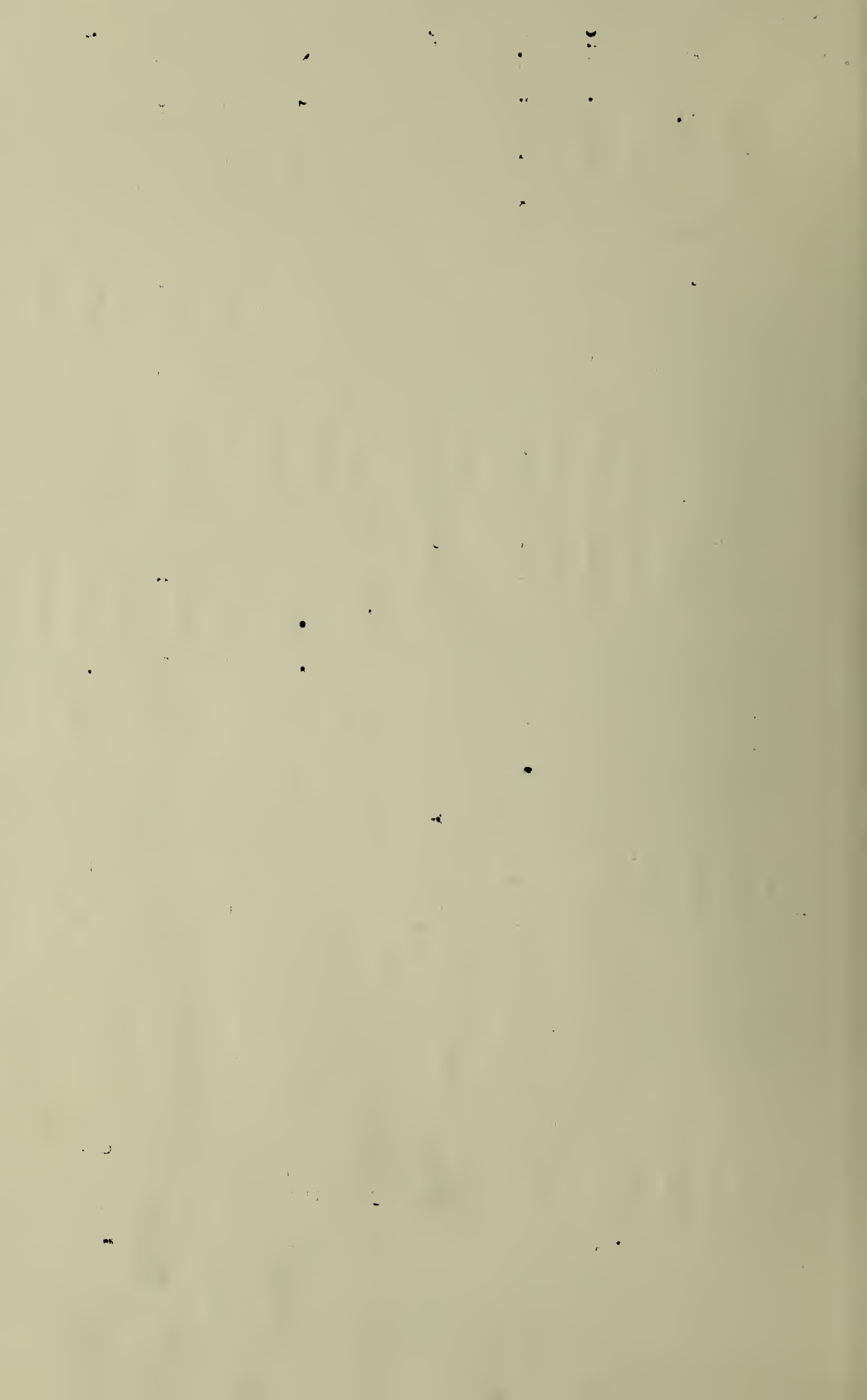
At the six Hownes Gill Cottages, Rowley, a direct supply from the Water Board mains was laid to the property to replace what had been an intermittent mains supply caused by the service being taken from the supply pipe to the Consett Engine Sheds, whereby, when the demands of the sheds were at peak periods, the cottages had no water, while in winter the exposed extension of the pipe line was usually frozen up and no supply was available.

Ten test samples of private spring supplies were taken during the year as a routine check of these supplies which serve properties remote from a mains supply. Where the quality of such supplies are doubtful, due to their shallow origin and resultant surface pollution, there is little that can be done beyond advice as to the treatment of the water before use. There is always a possibility that such advice can be ignored with a resulting risk. The properties concerned are mostly in the area for which the Tow Law-Rowley mains scheme was proposed, consequently, until that scheme does go through, these houses will never have a suitable water supply.

SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE AREA.

The schedule overleaf gives brief details of the work performed during 1947.

	Meat and other Food Inspecti- ons and Slaui- ghers Houses	Meat Shops.	Housing.	Vermineous Premises.	Drainage.	Refuse Removal & Salvage.	Refuse Tips.	Sanitary Accom- modations.	Conversions.	I.D. and Disinfection.	Farms and Cowsheds.	Milk Samples.	Milk Shops.	Offensive Trades.	Factories.	Bake-houses.	Water Supplies.	Vermine. Matters.	Other Matters.	TOTAL
BURNHOPE PEARTREE HOLMSIDE	20	1	84	1	22	167	25	20	6	4	6	1	1	1	1	1	37	30	18	140
LANCHESTER & MALTON. GREENCROFT. MAIDEN LAW.	29	1	210	10	30	207	35	38	14	6	9	1	1	1	8	1	4	6	38	635
CORNSAY - QUEBEC. HAMSTEELS HEDLEYHOPE & HEDLEYHILL.	13	1	272	4	70	234	21	21	5	12	21	7	1	1	8	1	6	1	52	756
ESH & ALLIERY.	1	1	2	1	8	29	6	1	1	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	3	53
LAMGLEY PARK ESH VILLAGE & HILL TOP	55	2	188	9	34	165	63	41	1	10	17	1	1	3	1	1	3	10	34	635
SATLEY & BUTSFIELD.	1	1	20	1	2	2	1	3	1	1	32	2	1	1	1	1	21	1	2	84
CASTLESIDE, ROWLEY & KNITSLEY.	1	1	134	1	43	98	1	28	26	4	12	1	1	1	5	1	25	1	19	112
MUGGLESWICK & WASKERLEY.	1	1	34	1	4	65	1	3	1	1	12	1	1	1	1	1	25	1	4	148
	117	2	944	25	213	967	150	154	45	41	110	12	1	4	25	1	121	47	17	3,157



	Informal Notices.	Formal Notices.	Nuisances Abated.
Foul Conditions	13	-	12
Structural Defects	1702	-	908
Overcrowding	5	-	3
Dairies and Milk Shops	8	-	6
Cowsheds	40	-	35
Bakehouses	3	-	1
Slaughterhouses	-	-	-
Ash-pits and Privies	175	-	71
Deposits of Refuse and Manure	211	-	211
Water Closets	32	-	30
Defective Yard Paving	1	-	1
Drainage Faults	99	-	70
Water Supply	101	-	85
Pig Sties	1	-	1
Animals improperly kept	3	-	3
Smoke Nuisances	1	-	1
Offensive Trades	-	-	-
Other Nuisances	173	-	170
Vermin Infestations	20	-	19
TOTAL...	2588	-	1627

DRAINAGE AND SEWAGE.

The major Council undertaking in this field and commenced during the year, was the extension of the Lanchester Sewage Disposal Works, estimated to cost £7430. The work was necessary by reason of past and proposed development in the village and had been deferred during the war years.

Improvements in drainage schemes for isolated dwellings were effected at the following premises:-

Biggen House Farm,	}	The whole of the premises re-drained to a septic tank and filter to replace obsolete and ineffective drainage systems and provide for W.C. sanitation.
Malton House Farm.		
Middle Hamsteels Farm.		
Hamsteels Hall Farm.		

Closet Accommodation.

During the year, two privy conversions were effected, while one additional W.C., was provided by alterations. At Esh Laude six dilapidated and badly sited Privy-ashpits were replaced by six ash-closets in a more convenient position.

The revised figures for the sanitary accommodation in the area are:-

Water closets	3350
Ash closets	701
Pail closets	15
Privy ashpits	277
Privies	74
Chemical closets	3

Public Cleansing.

The appalling wintry conditions which occurred at the beginning of the year made the year a memorable one. Impassable roads, streets, and refuse tips virtually brought refuse removal work to a standstill for more than a month in some places. It was not until the beginning of May that all the arrears of work were overtaken. In those cases where the conservancy type of closet still remain, and these are mostly associated with property proposed to be replaced, the situation at times was grim in spite of arduous

effort by the staff to minimise the inconvenience by carrying closet contents over long distances to the vehicle. The aftermath when the thaw became effective was heaps of refuse in a multitude of places which took considerable time and effort to clear up, and restore the position to normal.

The direct labour scheme was extended as at June, 16th. by another vehicle, and 806 premises including Burnhope, Peartree, Holmside, Greencroft and Railway Terrace, Hamsteels, were brought into the scheme.

Generally, the work has proved satisfactory, but the persistent and additional burden resulting from low-grade and dirty domestic fuel, creates a good deal of additional work which could be avoided in the form of reduced average yield of refuse per house.

The excessive amount of stone-spoil that was issued with miners' domestic coal became so acute in some parts of the area, that no improvement was effected in the matter until it was discussed with Group Headquarters of the National Coal Board, and agreement was reached for the better screening of the coal. Thereafter there was a marked reduction in the amount of stone-spoil and we were able to handle the volume of refuse, but, as previously stated, a better grade fuel could reduce our refuse total by 20%.

Seven districts continue to be let as contracts and once again the various circumstances have caused the average contract price per house to increase from 16/8½ to 20/3 for the current contract year.

Generally speaking, the work has been satisfactorily carried out, complaints usually being the minor ones, associated with difference of opinion as to the proper use of refuse storage, and the material to be removed.

Ash-bin Renewal Scheme.

This work continues to justify itself, in that decrepit ash-bins are promptly followed up for renewal, and now that the scheme has become known, many owners make use of it.

During the year 55 bins were issued for renewals under the scheme.

Factories Act, 1937.

The permanent building to house the cosmetic manufacturing business established in temporary premises in Lanchester last year, was commenced on the site facing Durham Road, Lanchester, and it is anticipated that the premises will be ready for occupation early next year.

The original small-pox hospital premises were adapted during the year and a clothing manufacturer commenced production there. This firm also expects to eventually have a suitably designed factory on the Durham Road site.

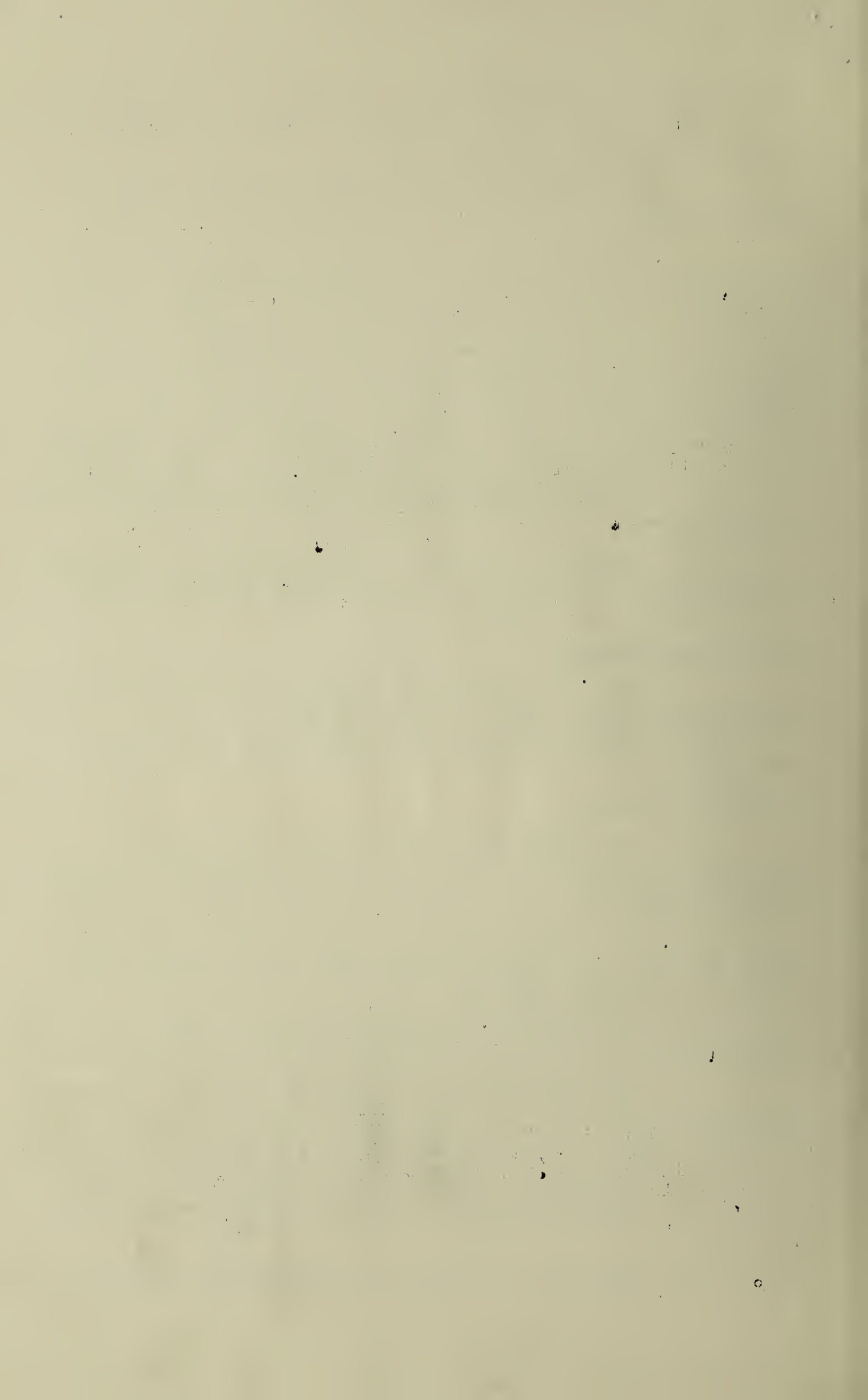
At Langley Park, premises originally built as club and recreational accommodation were adapted and put into use as a factory bakery, the new premises being intended to ultimately house the whole business at present located in an adjoining district.

The Castleside Smelting Mill Co. obtained some disused engine sheds at Waskerley Village during the year and transferred the burning of materials there, so that the nuisance from grit to Castleside village was practically removed. The sanitary accommodation at the new premises was not adequate for the staff and this matter was the subject of negotiations with this firm at the end of the year.

There are thirty one factories with power and thirty without power on the register at the end of the year.

Shops Act:-

There was no formal action taken during the year.



Housing:-

During the year the building of new houses was in operation by the Council as follows:-

	In course of erection	Completed.
Burnhope	6 (remainder of 36 houses)	6
Lanchester	112	22
Langley Park	70	-
Castleside	10	8
	<hr/> 198	<hr/> 36

Private building was in operation as follows:-

	In course of erection	Completed.
Upper Houses Farm	1	1
Kitswell Rd, Lanchester	1	-
Ushaw College, Esh	4	-
Wesley Tce, Castleside	6	3
Watergate Rd. "	4	4
	<hr/> 16	<hr/> 8

At North View, Esh, four back-to-back houses which had been partially closed pre-war under unfit housing procedure, were reconstructed and modernised into two-self-contained houses with all the facilities of modern houses.

This building to meet the needs of the area is encouraging, but as may be expected, for those without a home of their own, the speed of completion is always slower than the need.

The unfit housing position is still grim, when it is realised there are approximately 800 houses in the area which require replacing, and approximately half of which were earmarked for replacement prior to the war. The location, structural condition and arrangement of such houses prolong a drab and dreary aspect of housing. The sooner this problem can be tackled, even in part, the sooner so many of the unsavoury features of the living conditions of so many can be replaced by a happier and healthier environment.

The structural condition of such property was so bad in the following cases that Undertakings to close whenever vacated were accepted in the following cases:-

- 1,2 and 3, Stratford Cottages, Greencroft.
- 1 - 20, Dormands Cottages, Lanchester.
- 1 - 10, Cowsley Cottages, Cornsay.
- 1 and 2, Moores Building, Esh.
- Stobillee Farm, Langley Park.

Housing repairs and improvements continue to prove a constant problem, such demand much exceeding the capacity of available building repairers and the flow of materials. However, progress is being made but in the case of low-grade properties mentioned previously, so much of the effort seems wasted.

Major schemes of repair and reconstruction were commenced during the year to the following properties:-

- 1 - 10, Peartree Terrace.
- 1 - 11, peartree Cottages.
- Hamsteels Hall Farm.
- 1 and 2, South View, Castleside.

The question of alterations to the 108 houses comprising Esh Colliery was in negotiation with the National Coal Board at the end of the year and it is expected that the provision of new sanitary accommodation as the first phase in a comprehensive reconstruction scheme will be commenced next year.

At the end of the year some essential repairs were in progress to the 20 houses in Fell Row, Burnhope, it having been decided to have the work done to this low grade property as a measure of relief to the housing problem, in that a replacement scheme was not immediately practicable.

The 258 houses comprising Cornsay Colliery property, and earmarked for clearance, continue to give rise to dissatisfaction by reason of their bad arrangement, structural condition and inadequate maintenance. The unmade streets and patchwork drainage drainage system are a continual source of protest, and, while admitting the magnitude of the repair problem, it is difficult to know where to start and stop when it comes to decide where adequate can be reconciled to reasonable cost having regard to the limited life of the property.

These houses are an outstanding example of pre-war scheduled property, restricted to minute repairs due to the austerity of war years. With a progressively deteriorating effect of these years upon aged and worn out materials, the fact came here to roost very forcibly during the very severe winter conditions of the early months of the year when almost every house roof was penetrated by thaw water.

Two streets of houses were re-slatted en-bloc, during the year and other individual ones overhauled, but, on this item alone the task is not satisfactory on account of roof timber condition and the enormous number of roofs involved make the task formidable, apart from the question of other defects. It has not been possible to achieve a repair squad large or permanent enough to mitigate all the faults of this property, and while attempts were made to deal with the worst items, it is indicative that the earliest possible replacement of these houses is the only satisfactory solution of the problem.

With regard to intermediate class property, where the location and structure are sound, but modern facilities such as a hot and cold water supply and bath are absent, there seems an ardent desire on the part of owner/occupiers to instal these facilities. We welcome this modernisation of such property which brings about our desired standard. No priorities or permits are issued for the necessary materials to carry out improvements in deference to the priority needs of new houses. Where the items have been obtained, we have issued licences for the installation as they have come along, according to your declared policy in such instances. Improvements along these lines have been quite encouraging in that 36 such installations have been completed during the year, often associated with incidental repairs which have accumulated.

Civil Building Control.

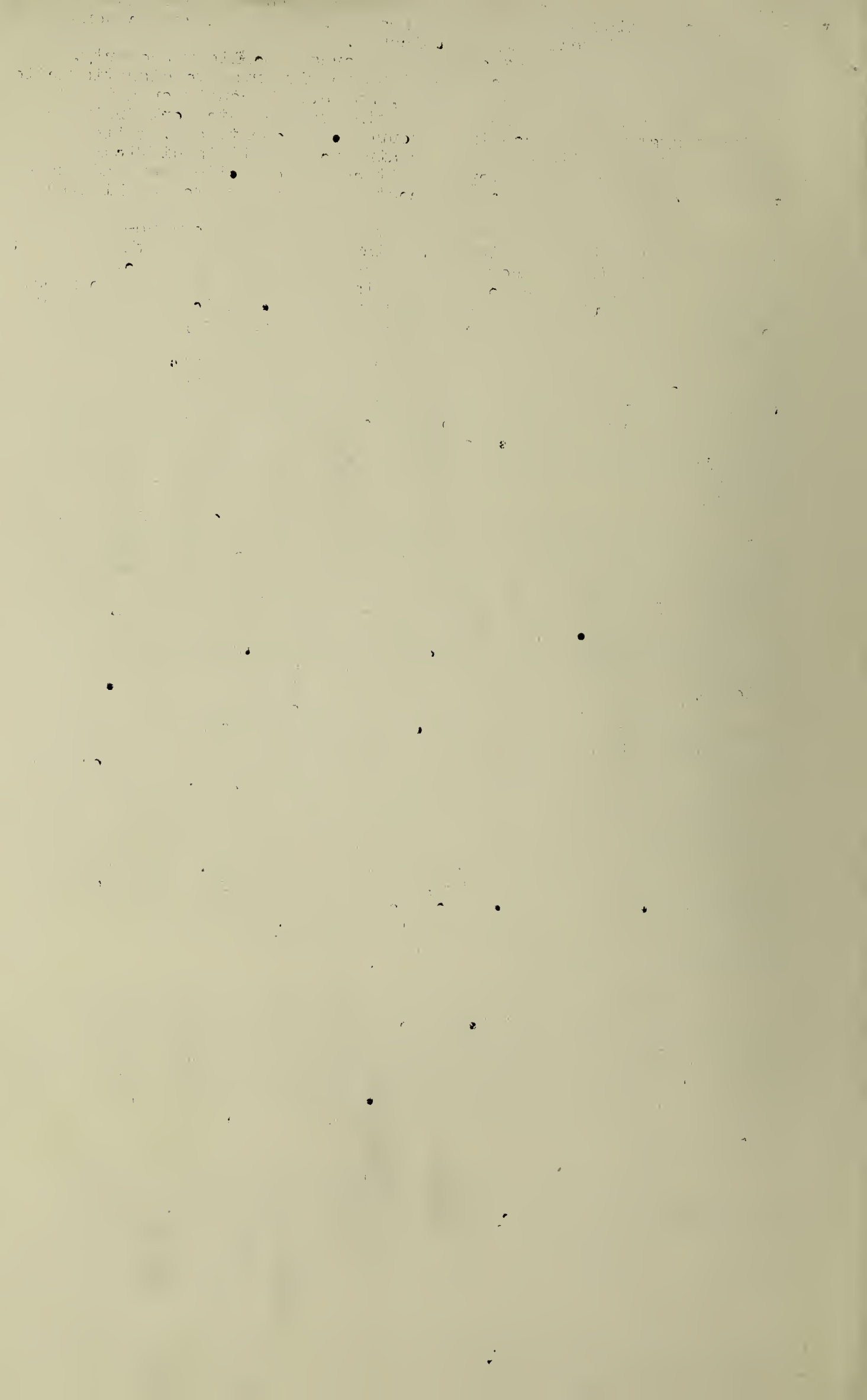
During the year 270 licences, covering an expenditure of £18,267 have been dealt with by this department. The volume of work that this has entailed, with the necessary inspections, certification, and clerical work can be appreciated from the figures quoted. This does not include investigation made on behalf of the Ministry department of matters concerned with licencing outside the jurisdiction of the local authority.

Overcrowding.

The true position of overcrowding seems as indistinct as ever, having regard to so much movement of population in the last two years, and newly married couples moving around finding temporary accommodation until they can get a house of their own.

It would seem to be appropriate to have a quick census of the area to ascertain the true position and so once again bring records up to date, and so be able to present a true picture of this position.

This suggestion is put forward, because as an example during a check survey of Cornsay Colliery property to be dealt with in the future, it was found that 41 of the 245 houses were overcrowded, 11 of them by sub-tenancies. This figure is presumed / to be



to be above the average for the district, but is indicative that the true position should be known to relate it to the housing need of the area in addition to replacement houses.

Rodent Control.

The second phase of the sewers and sewage works treatment scheme was completed by the beginning of the year and the principal findings are as follows:-

The sewers of twelve villages and their associated disposal works were concerned, and it was estimated that 580 rats were destroyed, based upon the amount of poison bait taken, and there is no doubt that these locations do institute the major source of rat infestation in your district, with agricultural holdings and water courses equally important factors. Slow flowing sewers are the principal habitats, with swift flowing sewers practically providing no result of infestation. Hence it is felt that with regular attention to sewage disposal works and certain indicated sewers, we can largely curtail the infestation even if we cannot eliminate it.

The principal case of private property dealt with during the year, related to Stobilee Farm, Langley Park, a house occupied by a mine-worker. The derelict buildings proved to be an ideal location for rats, and the extermination of the vermin proved to be a comprehensive job, but, we did succeed in clearing the premises.

Experience seems to indicate that the greatest success could be achieved in rodent control if the service were a free public one in much the same way as other services. This is borne out by the fact that where a charge is involved, there is reticence to report the presence of rats immediately, and when the position is known generally the infestation has had the opportunity to get established and spread, whereas a prompt report would very often only require a minor infestation to be dealt with. Such a scheme would avoid the delay associated with ascertaining who is to pay for work performed under the present arrangement.

Milk Supply.

The following are the main statistics relating to the area:-

No. of Registered Farms	166
No. Registered Cowsheds	212
No. Farms Registered during the year	7
No. Farms discontinued during the year	-
No. of Registered Producer/wholesalers	112
No. of Registered Producer/retailers	29
No. of Registered Producer/wholesaler-retailers	14
No. of Registered Buttermakers	14
No. Registered, but for own use only	2

Designated Milk Production.

No. of Producers of T.T. milk	7
No. of Producers of Accredited milk	48
No. of Supplementary licences issued for pasteurised milk	1
No. of licenced T.T. retailers	1

Three reconstruction schemes of farm premises were completed during the year at Inkerman, Esh Hall, and Greenwell Ford Farms, to permit the occupiers to take up T.T. milk production licences. This makes the number of T.T. licences held in the area to be seven.

High Hedleyhope and Derwent Grange Farms were licenced for Accredited milk production, the total of such licences in the area now being 48. As there were 352 Accredited producers in the County as at the 31st. December, 1947, it will be seen that 13 $\frac{1}{2}$ % of such licences are held by producers in your area.

